

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Caribe GE International of PR, Inc.

Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

#### Getting Smarter, Getting Leaner at GE Consumer & Industrial

##### Client Profile:

General Electric (GE) Consumer & Industrial is a residential circuit breaker assembler. The company assembles five families of breakers with various amounts of poles at its facility in San German, Puerto Rico.

##### Situation:

GE had begun Lean initiatives, but an overall Lean process approach was not evident throughout the plant. The company was experiencing inefficiencies due to lack of coordination between the operations, creating accumulation of work in process and the lack of needed components. Established Pull Kanban steps were not properly followed, and quality was being compromised in the final process. GE contacted the Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc (PRIMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, requesting an initial program to start a continuous improvement process implementing Lean concepts.

##### Solution:

PRIMEX recommended training in Lean diagnostics, Lean 101, and a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) kaizen. This was followed with the diagnostic report and the action plan resulting from the VSM kaizen. GE continued the implementation of 5S (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) and continuous flow. The results of the diagnostic report revealed inefficiencies and wastes in the company's processes. Following PRIMEX's recommendations, GE started an improvement program that included the implementation and follow up of 5S, establishing quality at the source and point of use storage while enforcing the pull kanban procedures previously established.

##### Results:

- \* Reduced work in process by 11 percent.
- \* Reduced floor space by 23 percent.
- \* Improved quality by 4 percent.

##### Testimonial:

"The VSM completed for our major volume product identified more than 40 Kaizens in different areas for all of our processes. We are proud to have completed 20 percent of these Kaizens and we are eager to continue improving with PRIMEX's guidance."

Felix Guerra, Plant Manager